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11 April 1966

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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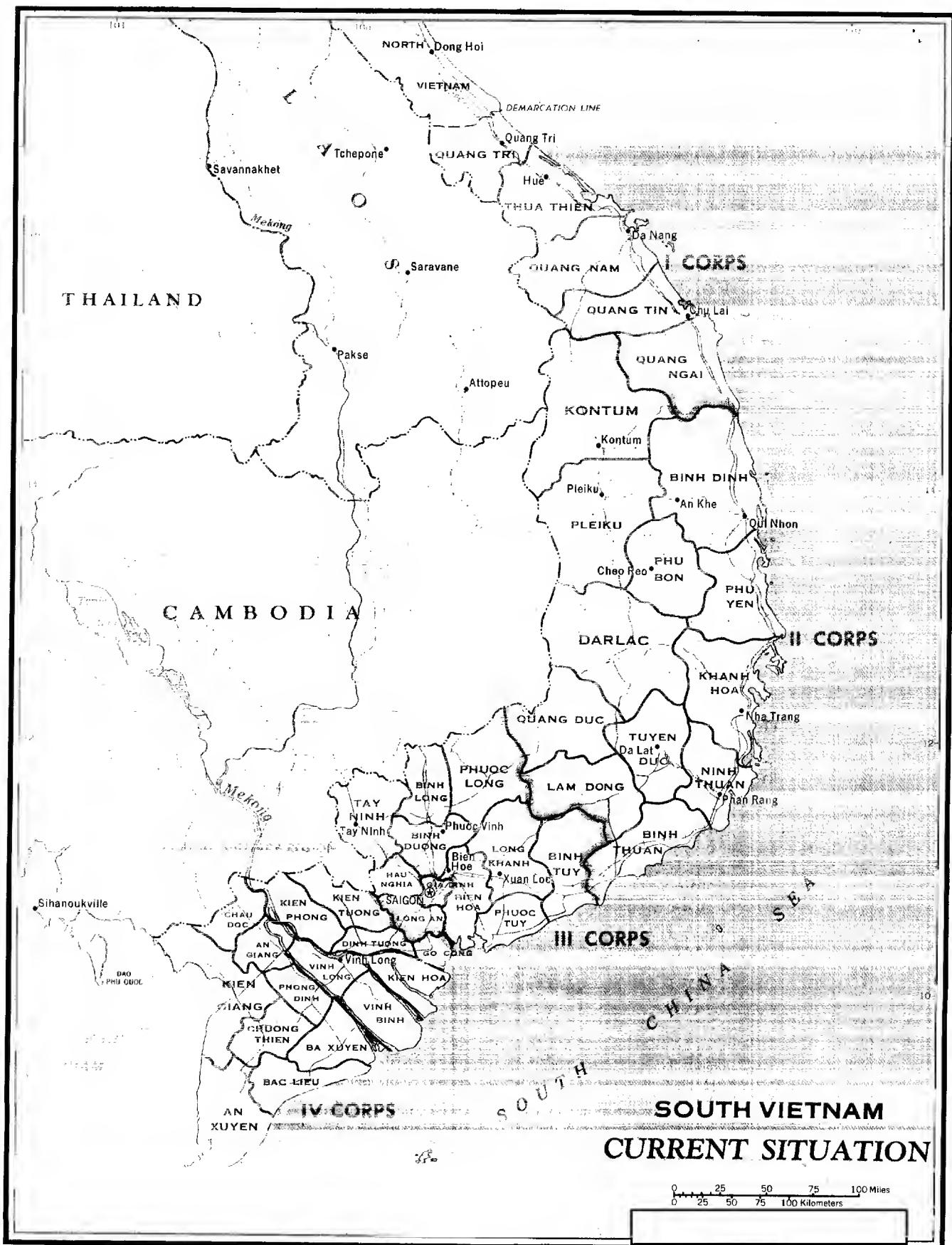
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***Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EST)**

Political Developments in South Vietnam: The threat of violence arising from any government military action in the Da Nang area subsided this weekend, while antigovernment elements devoted their attention largely to political strategy in Saigon.

General Ton That Dinh, under troop escort, was installed yesterday in the I Corps headquarters in Da Nang, where he summoned a meeting of all antigovernment commanders and ordered them to return their units to their normal bases. Although the commanders reportedly expressed confidence in Dinh, there have been no indications that other installations in the city, including the Da Nang radio, are reverting to Saigon's control.

No government reinforcements were sent during the weekend to the Da Nang air base. One of the three Vietnamese Marine battalions previously dispatched has now been withdrawn to Quang Ngai Province.

Meanwhile, various non-Buddhist groups met in Saigon yesterday and added their opinions that a civilian government is needed as soon as possible. The most noteworthy among them was a collection of Catholic, Hoa Hao, Cao Dai, and nationalist organizations which formed the "United Peoples National Front" apparently as a counterforce to the Buddhists. The Front espoused a desire for civilian government and a meeting between the Armed Forces Congress and religious and nationalist groups, but gave the impression that it feared the National Political Congress scheduled for this week would be government-controlled.

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While the civilian pressure groups are virtually unanimous in their stated goals for an end to military rule, there appears to be little likelihood for a unanimously arrived-at vehicle, be it convention, assembly, or congress, in which to institutionalize the means.

Buddhist leaders in Saigon have sought to dissociate themselves from recent street disorders by issuing a series of communiqüs on 9 April, ordering the faithful to participate only in demonstrations officially sponsored by the Unified Buddhist Association. The communiqüs, together with a follow-up press conference yesterday which launched the new "Vietnamese Buddhist Forces" political party, strongly reiterated earlier Buddhist demands and implied that these would never be fulfilled under the Ky government.

Military Situation in South Vietnam: The lull in military activity in South Vietnam continued over the weekend with only one significant ground action reported. An estimated battalion-size Viet Cong force launched a five-hour night attack against a government special forces outpost in Kien Tuong Province southwest of Saigon today. A two-company government reaction force subsequently deployed to ferret out the enemy retreating from the area encountered stiff opposition. Activity has now ceased. Government casualties were 19 killed (1 US), 24 wounded (7 US), and 14 missing. The enemy lost 60 killed, with many more bodies reported being carried away, 12 weapons and a small quantity of documents and medical supplies. One helicopter supporting the reaction force was downed by ground fire.

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***Dominican Republic:** Juan Bosch appears confident of repeating his 1962 victory in the elections scheduled for 1 June.

Bosch accepted the reported unanimous presidential nomination at the Dominican Revolutionary Party's national convention held over the weekend in Santo Domingo. A party moderate, Silvestre Antonio Guzman, won the vice-presidential nomination.

Only last week Bosch had pessimistically insisted that he could not be a candidate because the leaders of the Dominican armed forces would never permit him to govern if elected. On 7 April,

he predicted that if elected his ouster in a few months was inevitable and would be accompanied by an unequaled blood bath.

[Late last Friday, however, his emissaries informed a US Embassy official that Bosch had yielded to "pressures," including the argument that without him the party could not win, and had decided to become a candidate.]

In his acceptance speech, Bosch stressed his reluctance to accept the nomination, the dignity of working for a better future, and the necessity of ridding the country of the "Goliath" which had entered without permission. Using the allegory of Easter, he proclaimed the resurrection of the party.

Bosch can be expected to threaten, as he did in 1962, to withdraw from the race both for gaining publicity and the most favorable conditions from the provisional government. If elected, his abdication in favor of Guzman is also a possibility in light of his preconvention remarks and past reluctance to assume day-to-day administrative duties.

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Indonesia-Singapore-Malaysia: The new regime in Djakarta has made an overture to Singapore and stated its complaints against Malaysia.

Radio Djakarta announced on 10 April that President Sukarno has instructed Foreign Minister Malik to "make preparations" for the recognition of Singapore. The communique explained that recognition, to be announced "at the proper time," would permit confrontation against Malaysia to be intensified.

This move, however, is not likely to bring an early normalization of relations between Singapore and Djakarta. Both Singapore Prime Minister Lee and Malaysian Prime Minister Rahman have made clear in recent public statements that both their nations must be included in any settlement with Indonesia.

At the 9 April appointment ceremony for the new commander of Indonesian confrontation forces, General Suharto stated that Malaysia "would be accepted if the wishes of the people were channeled in democratic paths." He added that "the so-called safeguarding of security in Southeast Asia" by British bases in Malaysia endangered Indonesia.

Despite its relatively moderate tone, Suharto's statement suggests previous Sukarno/Subandrio demands: a plebiscite in the Malaysian Borneo states aimed at their withdrawal from the federation, and the end of British military presence in Malaysia. It remains to be seen whether the new ruling group in Djakarta will accept something less as a basis for an end to confrontation.

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NOTES

Egypt - Saudi Arabia - Yemen: Egyptian President Nasir has told the American ambassador in Cairo that the Jidda peace agreement to end the Yemen war is "finished." Nasir confirmed that the Harad conference which grew out of the agreement would be resumed, but added that it would amount to "nothing" and reiterated that he is prepared to keep up to half the present Egyptian troop strength in Yemen "for ten years." Meanwhile Saudi leaders are deeply concerned over what they feel may be an Egyptian build-up in Yemen near the Saudi border, and have instructed their troops in the area to defend against any Egyptian attempt to cross into Saudi territory.

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UK-Rhodesia: [Britain has taken immediate action under the 9 April UN Security Council resolution permitting use of force to prevent shipment of oil to Rhodesia through Beira in Portuguese Mozambique. On 10 April a British frigate stopped the tanker Manuela about 150 miles southeast of Beira and sent a boarding party to divert it. Denial of oil through the Beira-Umtali pipeline means loss of a relatively cheap and convenient source of oil but does not seriously reduce Rhodesia's ability to withstand sanctions in view of the continued arrival of oil from other sources.]

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Czechoslovakia: The Czechoslovakian party leadership feels unsure of its ability to solve fundamental economic, social, and ideological problems confronting it as the 31 May party congress approaches, according to the US Embassy in Prague. The atmosphere of pessimism among the leadership has flowed to the party rank and file and the general population, and expressions of concern over the progress of the economic reform, which has been impeded over the past two years by conservative opposition, further reflect lowering morale. There are, however, no signs that the party leadership is losing control and no major personnel shake-up appears likely at the forthcoming party congress.

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Bolivia: General Rene Barrientos finally announced on 9 April that he is a candidate for the presidency in the national elections on 3 July, according to press reports from La Paz. Presumably Barrientos will run as the candidate of the Bolivian Revolutionary Front, the four-party alliance he put together last November, and Luis Adolfo Siles will be his vice-presidential running mate. Saturday's demonstrations commemorating the 1952 revolution were mild by Bolivian standards--only one person was killed and four were wounded.

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